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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/13/2027

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH VICE FOREIGN MINISTER VALERO

REF: CARACAS 2099

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert Richard Downes for Reason 1.4  
(b) and (d).

11. (C) Ambassador Duddy and PolCouns met November 2 with BRV Vice Foreign Minister Jorge Valero and MFA Director for North America Affairs Yaneth Arocha at the CMR to review bilateral relations. This was the first meeting with BRV officials since the Ambassador's October 29 discussion with Chavez (reftel). In a mildly encouraging exchange, Valero, commenting favorably on the meeting between the Ambassador and President Chavez, agreed with the Ambassador's suggestion that the two countries focus on improving cooperation on a number of areas, such as counter-narcotics and aviation. Valero said it was important to keep the number of issues small so that real progress could be made. He implied that additional meetings on this subject would be forthcoming. The Ambassador also reminded Valero the U.S. is still waiting for a response to our April 2006 request to re-open the Consulate in Maracaibo.

12. (C) In reponse to questions by PolCouns on civil aviation, Arocha promised to follow up again with INAC (the Venezuelan aviation authority) to try to secure TSA security assessments for Venezuela's four international airports and carriers. PolCouns and Arocha also discussed briefly the issue of improving visa processing and terms for tdy official visitors.

DUDDY